

Family Arabian 2008

It has been three years since DAHA decided to honor the Family Arabian with his own award. How proud I am that we decided to put the spotlight on the horses who touch our hearts. Sometimes they are also our prized show horses, but sometimes it is an especially sweet lesson horse or maybe a horse that has stood patiently and listened to us when we were having a bad day. Establishing this award, encourages us to look at our horses from a slightly different perspective—not only for how they can perform but also for how they touch our lives.

In an economy where people are selling and sometimes even abandoning their horses, it was particularly touching to read the narratives of the 5 owners who nominated their horses—four of whom are deceased—for Family Arabian 2008. I hope you enjoyed reading the stories and looking at the pictures. Please think about your own experiences and the horses that have touched you. Your horse could be the Family Arabian for 2009. Contact me and I will help you to nominate your special horse.

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2008 Family Arabian Horse

Award Winner:

Pati Cake +//

By Amy Edwards

We first met Pati in the fall of 2003. Annie Daher was off to college and was looking for someone to lease her. Two years later she then decided to sell her to us and I surprised the girls with a banner on her stall, which read, "Wishes can come true! Welcome Pati Cake to our family!" The thing that struck me about Pati and is the first thing I remember when I think about her now is her loving and understanding eyes. Pati had been "on the road" for most of her life and was a multi national champion in Western Pleasure and Trail. Her striking beauty made her a horse that everyone remembered, and she was well known throughout our region. But as my daughter first rode this sometimes "hot" and decorated show horse for a lesson when she was just 8 years old to try her out, she instantly got along with Pati, and I believe Pati knew that this little girl would take her to the end of her life and love and care for her along the way, so she in turn took extraordinary care of Allison. I can remember Jill Mitchell talking to Allison in the stands at Scottsdale after her class was over, and she told her that she believed that Pati really loved her, appreciated her quiet ways and that they made a great team. And sure enough they did. By the summer of 2005, they had won almost everything together; Regional Champions in Walk-Jog Western Pleasure, and Top Fives in Walk-Jog Western Seat Equitation and Showmanship. When we made it to Youth Nationals for our first time Allison was 11 years old, and Pati Cake took her to a Reserve National Championship in Showmanship for handlers 10 years old and younger. Even this past summer she was Regional Champion in the HA Trail JTR, and Regional Reserve Champion in the Western Horsemanship, along with Top Fives in Showmanship and HA Western Pleasure.

That's not to say that this Half-Arabian mare didn't have her sassy side. Oh by all means she did. She was not easy to ride and was always testing. Because of all of her experience she always knew more than we did, and she won her share of the games, but she taught us well too. The lessons we learned from her we will carry with us always.

And so as you can see we spent much time traveling with Pati Cake and enjoyed much success. But those travel times were such a small portion of the time we spent with Pati.

Mostly she was at home in a stall where she had resided since she was 3 years old. Her window faced the road into the parking lot and she always recognized the sound of my car and would nicker to us as we arrived at the barn. Then as we would head down the barn aisle, she would do an about face and call to us as we neared her stall. She knew that her little girls, Allison along with her little sister Caroline, most of the time had something good to eat for her and if not that then at least some very kind words. And she would greet us not only with her voice, but her warm and understanding eyes. The love that she showed us every day was indescribable. Allison said that she shared with Pati all of her secrets, and I know she was a very patient listener. I believe she watched us all so closely, she could see when she could test us with her "sassy side", or calm us with her understanding.

This mare actually had such important work well away from the show ring. Pati was more of a type of therapist really. She helped the family before us through the sudden death of their mom, and I just know that Pati must have had a way to take their mind off of such a tragedy, whether she may have tested them with her strong will, or listened while they cried with her. And for us, she helped us through a difficult time in our family as well. I know that she must have listened to Allison's feelings throughout that time, as she did mine. It was always a moment that made you feel better just to visit her and see her beautiful face.

Her face is the last memory I have of Pati Cake, our once in a lifetime mare, as Allison and I visited her in the hospital in Albuquerque minutes before she underwent colic surgery. We cried with her one last time, but did not really believe it was goodbye, when we left her that day. As I left the room with Allison, I looked back on her to see those wonderful eyes again, those eyes that helped us all and loved us and trusted us. She had a wonderful life, but that day a member of my family passed away. She left us with many accomplishments, and successes, but most of all she left two families with the joyful times that she brought to us and the memory and privilege of having owned one of the most beautiful animals that will ever grace this earth. If there is life after this, Pati, I hope we get to see you again, but for now, we will carry you with us in our hearts and dreams.

Do you want to nominate your horse? Send your story, along with a picture, to sidneysimpson@comcast.net

2008 Family Arabian Horse Award Winner:

Pati Cake +//

By Annie Daher

I'll always remember the day Pati arrived at our barn, walking her nervously into her new stall for the first time, not knowing where this new partnership would take us. Soon after Pati joined my family, my mother died suddenly and tragically. It was this time in my life, I realize, that Pati and I became such special friends.

Pati began recognizing my footsteps on the cement barn floor, and when she heard me coming, she would press her face against the stall bars, watching for me. I began the habit of whistling softly when I walked into the barn, to which Pati would always nicker in response. As a twelve-year old girl, feeling totally alone in the world, this connection made my life bearable. I remember in those days that sometimes when I was sad or thinking about serious things, Pati would touch her nose to my ear and breathe softly on it. She would stand very still when she did this, and I was always surprised in these breaks from her usual hot and spirited behavior. I think that, like many special pets, and friends, that she knew when I needed a moment. As I got older, she began recognizing the sound of my car, and would start whinnying before I even entered the barn.

Over the days and weeks that turned into years, Pati became a better show partner than I could have asked for. She was extraordinarily talented and I often felt that it was my job to just ask her for things the right way—if I asked nicely, Pati would do anything for me. Over time, the exhilaration of completing a trail course gracefully in the show arena was outshone by the peaceful feeling of sitting on Pati's back, backing step-by-step through a back-through at home, walking her bareback, or taking her on solitary trail rides. It was in these moments that I felt connected, and at peace, and I will cherish them forever.



Allison and Pati

I was lucky that when it came time for me to go off to college, Amy and her girls were looking for a horse to lease. After realizing that I would be financially unable to support Pati after I graduated, I was blessed to pass her on to her new family, knowing that they would love her as I always had, and allow me to continue to be a part of her life. I saw the Edwards' relationship with Pati, and Allison's in particular, as similar to what I shared with her. Amy often told me that Allison "told her secrets" to Pati, and I really believe that listening was her true calling. I watched Allison ride her many times, and one thing that always struck me was that Allison, like me, asked Pati nicely, and Pati gave her all she could give. In the end, we all became connected. Pati was loyal to us in a way that I've never seen before in a horse. She read us, and was tough when we could take it, and extremely gentle and quiet when we needed her to be. I felt sometimes that she knew me better than I knew myself, and I imagine that the Edwards feel similarly.

I am writing this second nomination because I know that for Pati to receive this "family horse" award would mean the world to Allison. Pati kept our two families together through hard times, and more than earned her place in heaven. She gave everything she had for two little girls, and she loved our two families unconditionally. Of the many awards Pati has won, I believe this would be the greatest honor.

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2008 Family Arabian Horse

Nominee:

BREEZY

By Elizabeth "Lizzie" Rogers

If you think back, there is always one horse that you remember and love the most. For me that horse is Breezy. Breezy was certainly not the best show horse, nor the most trained, but she had the most heart and the most spirit that I have ever seen in a horse. Breezy taught me how to ride, how to love, and how to lose.

Standing a little higher than fourteen hands, eight-year-old Breezy was a small and sturdy horse in stature. Her perfect flea-bitten coat would shine in the early afternoon sun, while her dainty hooves would go clip-clop on the pavement. Breezy's thick mane and tail would fly around her, as the wind let loose, and her alert ears would prick up as a squirrel crossed our path. This sturdy little bundle of energy was flighty and easily spooked, but in the last few months of her life, Breezy would gain the courage and get over the scary pebbles and trees in her way.

On our last trip together, my Breezy would succumb to colic, and force me to make the hardest decision in my life. How do you say goodbye to your best friend? How do you watch them walk away from you forever? This is what I had to decide, when the vet in L.A. let me make the fatal decision. Breezy's hind end had become paralyzed, if she stood, she would collapse. Her heart rate was over three times to fast, and her intestines were all as swollen as they could get. The only other option was for Breezy to undergo a ten thousand dollar surgery, that she had very little prospect of even surviving. If Breezy did survive and got lucky enough to recover, she would never be able to do anything again.

Breezy would not want to live like that, and so the decision was simple. I would make my last goodbyes to a friend who had always been there. Upon my entering her stall, Breezy began thrashing around, and trying, but failing to stand. Breezy had on a muzzle that was dripping blood, and her eyes were dulled in pain. Breezy's body was covered in dried sweat, and her sides were so sucked in you could see every bone in her body. Breezy barely looked like the horse I had petted and hugged yesterday, it was like looking at a ghost.



Lizzie and Breezy competing at 2007 DAHA Spring Show

As I held her head in my hands, and kissed her eyes, I knew in my heart that Breezy was in pain and needed to be relieved of it. As my baby took her last breaths, I knew this was the last I would see of her on this earth.

On the car ride home to the show grounds from the hospital, I was inconsolable, but I knew Breezy was in a better place. Even now after a year of losing my horse, I still miss her and will continue to think of her every day for the rest of my life.

When people ask me, "So, do you have a horse?" I now have to answer, "I used to." This happens almost everyday for me, and so almost everyday I have to relive that horrible day. I hate crying and feeling sad, I would rather think only of the happier times I had with Breezy. It is every little girl's dream to have her own horse, and when I finally bought my own horse, she was stolen from me for no good reason at all. I know I will see Breezy again one day, because her spirit cannot die.

That was the hardest thing I have ever had to do. To lose my best friend and first horse, it is one of the hardest things to go through. Breezy is gone because she succumbed to colic, but her memory will forever live on. All I have left of her is a tail and memories, but no one can take them away from me. Breezy taught me how to ride, how to love, and how to lose.

Breezy, my baby, you will forever live on in my heart, and I will never ever forget you. Goodbye and rest in peace, my baby Breezy.

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Family Arabian Horse Award

Nomination:

Chenin Blanc

By Cheryl Harrison

SH Chenin Blanc was a wonderful mare! When asked to do something she did it and when you were in danger she made sure that she protected you. When around children she was careful not to step on them as they were going in and around and under her. My niece Sarah, age 7, came to visit on Thanksgiving 2007 and her comment to me was that she was the luckiest girl alive because she got to ride Chenin Blanc three whole times in one day. When she left she was sobbing hysterically, I asked her what was wrong, she said she lived so far away in Louisiana and she wanted to stay in California and ride Chenin Blanc every day. Little did I know that Sarah would be the last to ride Chenin Blanc.

She was a good friend and a very smart horse! She helped me to learn dressage on her along with both of us entering our first horse show together. We were able to get through the test and had a good time even if the temperature was above 100 degrees. She even allowed me to dress her up in costume which was a very eventful class!

Chenin Blanc is out of BA Vanity Star/*Silver Vanity and Kaiyoum/Khemosabe. Vanity Star was leased to the Hearst Ranch in San Simeon during 1980. We are forever thankful to "the Hearst Ranch" for Vanity Star being in their barn. She was then bred to Kaiyoum and as the story goes born in Paso Robles in 1982 and when my husband and I were married in 1986 we sold her to a syndicate, K4 Arabians/ Ocean Mist Arabians, in Goleta. We thought that she was to be a show horse and we did not want to stand in her way. Later we would learn that this was a big mistake! She was shown in halter and soon after, they bred her to the stallion Tradito. She had one colt named, Forward, born April 19, 1988. We have tried to find him but he is still registered to the prior owner.

Around 1989-1990 the horse industry problems sent Chenin Blanc and eighteen other horses to the Buelton Feedlot. These beautiful Arabian Horses were auctioned off as dog food or sold for a small fee.

Fortunately, she was bought by Julieanne Hybert of Montecito after a trainer friend saw Chenin Blanc and thought Julieanne and Chenin Blanc would make a good match. How true it was! After quarantine they took her to Royal Egyptian Arabians where she lived for ten years. It was here that they went on many trail rides together. During her time at Royal Egyptian Arabians she came down with anaphylactic seizure to what they think was a bee sting. Her whole body was swollen, so much so that Julieanne did not recognize her. After vet care she soon became herself again. Julieanne and I talked for hours regarding what had happened to her during those ten years. At which time we were invited to visit with her and see Chenin Blanc again. We headed for Santa Barbara and loved seeing Chenin Blanc in all her White Beauty. During this time Julieanne had renamed Chenin Blanc, Zahara, the Arabic meaning of "to shine".

Within a year we received a call from Julieanne and she asked us if we were interested in taking Chenin Blanc back! We were not even ready for a horse again. But we went ahead anyway and kept her at a friend's barn in Newcastle until our property was ready. Through the process of having her home we decided we wanted a foal out of her. We bred her to BA-Di Atrivido, owned by Catherine McCall in Morgan Hill. We could not get her pregnant so Catherine offered her mare Famemiss and bred her to her stallion. Before she came to us in foal, she was diagnosed with a mild case of laminitis. We cared for her and unfortunately she again came down with advanced laminitis. On November 11, 2000 she had a colt and we named him Famous Shaklan+/. We came close to losing both of them. Famemiss died October 4, 2001. Another sad day, she was Chenin Blanc's best friend!



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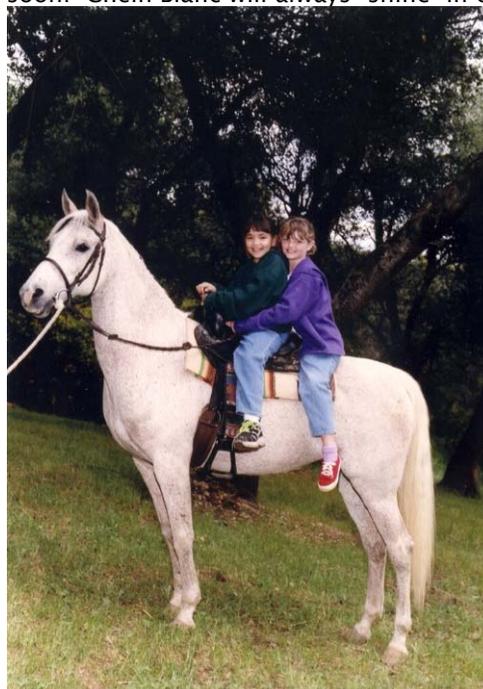
In June of 1999 we had a culture sent to Colorado Veterinary Laboratory and found that Chenin Blanc had a foreign object in her and that was the reason we could not get her in foal. Then in 2003 we had to make an emergency trip to UC Davis Veterinarian Hospital where they did surgery on her and removed a very large enterolith, which we call our art piece from Chenin Blanc. We had tried three times to get Chenin Blanc in foal and on the third try she was pregnant. On June 16, 2000 Dr. Robert Morgan from Loomis Basin Veterinarian Clinic was able to do artificial insemination, this being the third and last try to get her pregnant. I still have no clue as to how she carried Sirah throughout the birth while having an enterolith in her belly. When her checkup came July of 2000 we celebrated with Champagne when Dr. Morgan did an ultrasound and he announced to us that she was pregnant! They were all very loving and important in Chenin Blanc's life. Zaharas' Silver Sirah+ was born on May 28, 2001, a fantastic Memorial Day present from Chenin Blanc. I was midwife to both Sirah and Shaklan with Catherine by phone through the entire birth. Yes, both times I was in tears of joy! This was an experience I will never forget! And, I have Sirahs' birth on tape. It just so happened that Julieanne and David Hybert were here in Auburn to visit with Chenin Blanc and at three in the afternoon Chenin Blanc gave birth to Sirah with all of us helping her bring Sirah into the world. What a great day this was! We were all so excited! Again we celebrated with Champagne and a toast to Chenin Blanc and her foal Sirah!

We were in Colorado in October of 2006 when Chenin Blanc had her injury to three of her leg's, this seemed the start of her leg and hoof problems. This was also the beginning of a very painful and difficult process! We tried to keep her comfortable while one thing led to another and on March 7, 2008 Chenin Blanc had to be euthanized. I don't wish this on any owner that loves their horse! This was very difficult for both Sonny and I along with Julieanne and David.

Chenin Blanc not only had illustrious lineage from the "Silver Fire" line, but she was also a confident companion, school horse for training little ones to ride and not be afraid of those big horses, but she managed to make her way into everyone's heart in one form or another. From neighborhood children riding her, to 4-H Girls, to foreign exchange students, she carried our granddaughters, friend's children and my niece Sarah and nephew Evan.

Her fate was sealed so many times only for her to bounce back from one heartfelt moment to another. She was a true "diva" of the Arabian horse world. A quote from Lady Wentworth stated that her grey mares in the "Silver Fire" line have one particular trait of tossing their heads in what Cecil Covey described as "a corkscrew manner". This lives on through Chenin Blanc and to Zaharas' Silver Sirah+. That being the 'silver' line gene.

Shy of only twenty-nine days until her 26th birthday she will be remembered as a show horse, family play horse, and loving companion. We still look for her at her place in the barn. We all felt her love and her friendship in our lives, we will always miss her and long for her nuzzle. She loved to lick you! Chenin Blanc and Famemiss are buried under a great oak tree in our pasture and God willing, we will meet again soon! Chenin Blanc will always "shine" in our lives.



Chenin Blanc and her girls

Family Arabian Horse Award

Nomination:

Desert Sheik+

By Jan Williams

HOW GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS. These are the words of an old hymn, but they also describe GA Desert, Legion of Honor Recipient. Sheik embodied the qualities that made him a great horse. For those who knew him, he stood for fairness, trustworthiness, calmness in the face of danger, and beauty beyond measure. His huge black, expressive eyes looked at the world with optimism—around every corner he saw something of interest, never wavering from the unknown. We were lost on Mount Diablo together—a great test of friendship. Long after the trees hid the moon and the creatures of the night came out, we rode on looking for a way off the mountain. We ended up on the Castle Rock side of Mount Diablo! HOW GREAT WAS HIS FAITHFULNESS. Sheik never once balked at the things of the night. He slid down washes and ravines into unknown blackness, yet he maintained his cool while I began to panic.

He rose to the call whenever he was asked to do something different. At the Cow Palace he eagerly accepted English Saddle Seat and in his first outing, won his class and the championship silver belt buckle. Others in the stands and the other riders in the ring didn't give him much notice. They were too busy watching the horses who had won the class in previous outings. Mary Hansen and Sheik didn't care. They took on eight horses of exceptional quality and walked away with the coveted prize.



When checking fence lines on an adjoining ranch months later we came upon a bobcat in a trap. He snarled and hissed. The other horses in our group bolted. While the other riders fought for control of their mounts, Sheik stood his ground and kept an eye on the trapped cat.

Sheik, a western horse, taught me to ride English. From the start it was obvious he intended to win every class he went in, and he won many. The one dear to my heart was his first outing in Arabian Show Hack. With little or no training in this discipline, he won the class to the applause of the crowd.

Ask Glade Faulkner about this beautiful white Arabian. Be prepared for an hour dissertation on this wonderful horse. Ask the hundreds of students who learned to ride about Sheik. They will all tell you the same thing. He had a heart as big as a football and a willingness that equaled no other. Sheik left this earth a champion. He will be missed.

Do you want to nominate your horse? Send your story, along with a picture, to sidneysimpson@comcast.net

Family Arabian Horse Award

Nomination:

Tasha

By Emily and Suzie Reisfelt

My name is Tasha and this is my family Arabian story.

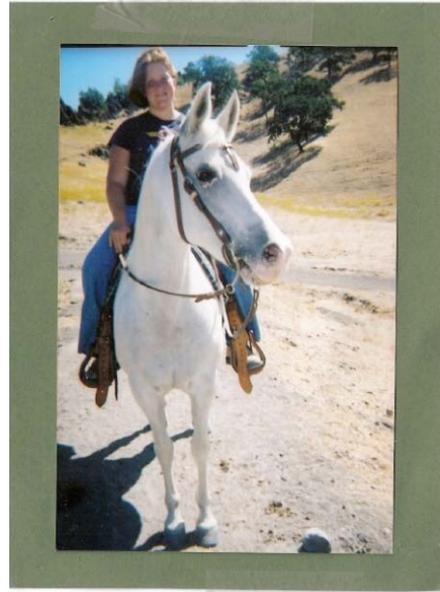
I moved to Summit Ranch in Alamo in 2001. Wow what a move, big stall and a paddock filled with sand, perfect for my morning nap once those humans got over interrupting it every day. Don't they understand a Princess needs her beauty nap?

My new life was to be a family horse for Emily and Susie. To teach and give confidence to Emily and to be a trail riding horse for Susie. My days with Emily are the best - grooming, walks, pampering, what more could I ask for. She has grown to be quite the young lady under my tutelage. Most of my time with Susie is spent roaming the trails around Mt. Diablo. Those are great except for the horse eating rocks out there. I am currently teaching her how to do trail obstacles. She is quickly catching on that I know more, so enjoy the ride!

Like all good family horses I am well spoiled and well loved. Lots of carrots and cookies, long rides and grooming. The only thing missing is living in the house. I think I would fit a king size bed perfectly and I much prefer human company to horse company.

Prior to becoming a family horse I was hauled all over the country as a show horse - New Mexico, Kentucky, Nevada, Arizona and all over California. They even went as far as dressing me up in a pink costume and running me around the Cow Palace. Now what dignified horse wants to be seen in a palace for cows. I had already drawn the line at chasing cows. All the different outfits were one thing but now way was I going to chase a smelly cow. The best part of the horse shows was begging for goodies from all of our surrounding barn neighbors. I was quite good and smacking my lips and getting extra treats. One of the best times I had was at Reno when the kids dressed me up and Annie and Jackie took me in the tandem bareback class. What could be better than standing in the barn aisle with a lot of kids doting over me?

My time as a show horse was fun but I love being a family horse and being spoiled like a princess.



Emily and Tasha out on a trail ride.